

# JACG 74CE

NEWSLETTER  
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THE JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP

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## From the Editor's Desk...

Soon the skies will clear, the air will chill and the beauty of autumn will be upon us. Summer's promise of bounty will be delivered and it will become a time for reflection on the productive season just behind.

As it is with the cycle of nature so it has also to be with the structure of our club. Within the next two months you need to look back upon this past productive season you have had with JACG and decide if it is time for you to plant the seeds which will reap a harvest for all of us in the coming year. It is, in short, time for new officers.

Most organizations chug along with the same few people doing all the work all the time. The problem with this is obvious and further compounded by the fact that, frankly, many of the doers have taken on other responsibilities and/or are burning out. The JACG is faced with replacing its President, Vice President, and Secretary during the upcoming election in November. None of the incumbents are in a position to continue.

It is time for you to search your conscience and priorities. We know that the JACG is loaded with leaders. The moment of decision is now. Please call Art Leyenberger if you will have your name placed on the slate for the coming year.

We all need you.

  
Frank Pazel  
Editor-in-Chief, JACG Newsletter

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

### JACG Meeting Schedule

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October 12, 1985
November 9, 1985
December 14, 1985
January 11, 1986
February 8, 1986
March 8, 1986
April 12, 1986

## ATARI CORP. NEWS

By Neil Harris - Atari Explorer  
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(August 4, 1985) Atari Corp. has passed its first birthday. If we may be so immodest, here is a look at the past year's milestones:

Jan-Jun, 1984...Atari, Inc., loses several hundred million dollars.

July 2, 1984...Atari Corp. founded on assets of Atari Inc., purchased from Warner Communications Inc., by Jack Tramiel and associates.

Jul-Sep, 1984...2500+ employees laid off as Atari gets realistic. Facing a major downturn in the overall computer market, Atari prepares to launch the Computers That Couldn't Be Done.

Oct-Dec, 1984...a cloak of secrecy descends over Atari Corp. There is wild speculation in the press -- Commodore inciders saying Jack is out of cash (how would THEY know??), and lots of rumors. Was it really a corporate strategy to clam up and get free publicity...?

Jan, 1985...The Unveiling of the 1985 Atari lines. The 130XE as the enhancement to the 8-bit line confirming Atari's link with its current base, and the all-new ST line with price and performance that were unbelievable. One engineering newspaperman went so far as to trace the wires -- he was told by an "unnamed competitor" that there was really a VAX running the show from the back room. Atari Explorer magazine debuts with full coverage of new product lines.

April, 1985...130XE ships. Atari wows dealers at Comdex and in Toronto. Dave Duberman joins Atari to head "User Group Support".

June, 1985...CES -- we were there after all, with the ST RAMDISK encyclopedia. Yet they still scoff.

July, 1985...ST ships. The product has gone from idea to final product in a year -- while certain "competitors" have yet to see release or much longer times. Atari Corp. adding Schreyer, Don Thompson, and 19 rep firm to get sales going in fall.

The next milestone? Well, I suppose that we'll be awaiting the flood of ST software this fall, and looking eagerly at the Xmas sales figures and at the announcements in the next January's CES (what about that 32-bit add-on box?). Time will tell -- but it looks awfully good for Atari again.



## ATARI XE NEWS

By Neil Harris - Atari Explorer  
Copyright 1985 by Atari Corp.  
Downloaded from Atari BBS (408)745-5308

(August 4, 1985)

The biggest story for the 8-bit line was April's release of the 130XE. This was the most powerful Atari computer released yet, although its debut was somewhat overshadowed by Atari's splashy new ST computer line. And, at \$149.95 (suggested list price), this is the most affordable Atari computer ever launched.

The 130XE is fully compatible with the 800XL. It features an additional 64K of RAM, which is controlled through 4 bits in the PIA chip. Two of the bits choose which of the four 16K sections of extra RAM is used. The other two bits activate and deactivate extra RAM for the 6502 cpu chip and for the video processor. This could lead to advanced video games where a bank of memory is exclusively devoted to the graphics.

The new DOS 2.5 was released at the same time as the 130XE. DOS 2.5 was designed to give the same extra storage as DOS 3 while keeping the ease of use and compatibility to DOS 2. In addition, the DOS 2.5 includes a file called RAMDISK.COM. When a 130XE boots DOS 2.5, the extra 64K is configured as a 499-sector RAMDISK. The DOS menu program loads instantly and MEM.SAV's happen automatically too. Downloading into a RAMDISK can sure cut down on connect charges and phone bills -- just dump to the "slow" disk AFTER hanging up!

Software is expected to come along to take advantage of the extra memory. AtariWriter Plus (coming any day now folks) has two versions on the same disk -- one for the 130XE and the other for lower-RAM computers. We hear that SynFile+ will also be upgraded to perform MUCH BETTER thanks to the extra RAM. PaperClip is also reputed to be on its way in a 130XE-enhanced version.

### XM301 MODEM COMING...

(8/4/85)

The XM301 modem is scheduled for imminent release. This near-pocket-sized modem plugs into the serial bus and into a phone line. It includes auto-dial and auto-answer, and it plays the telephone audio through your TV speaker so you can hear a busy signal or wrong number (the audio is turned off when you get a carrier).

This modem includes a brand new terminal program on disk called "XETERM", written by HomePak author

Russ Wetmore. This program supports X-modem and CompuServe A protocol for uploads and downloads.

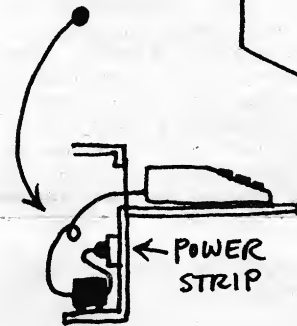
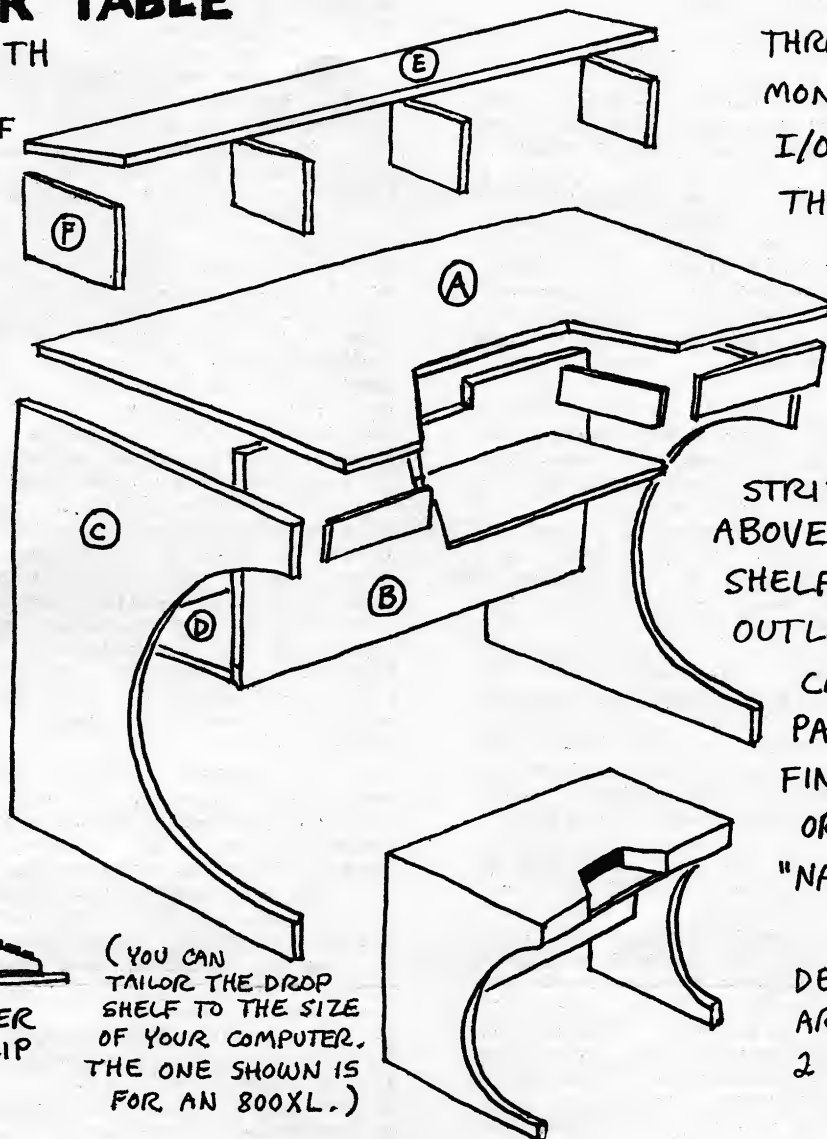
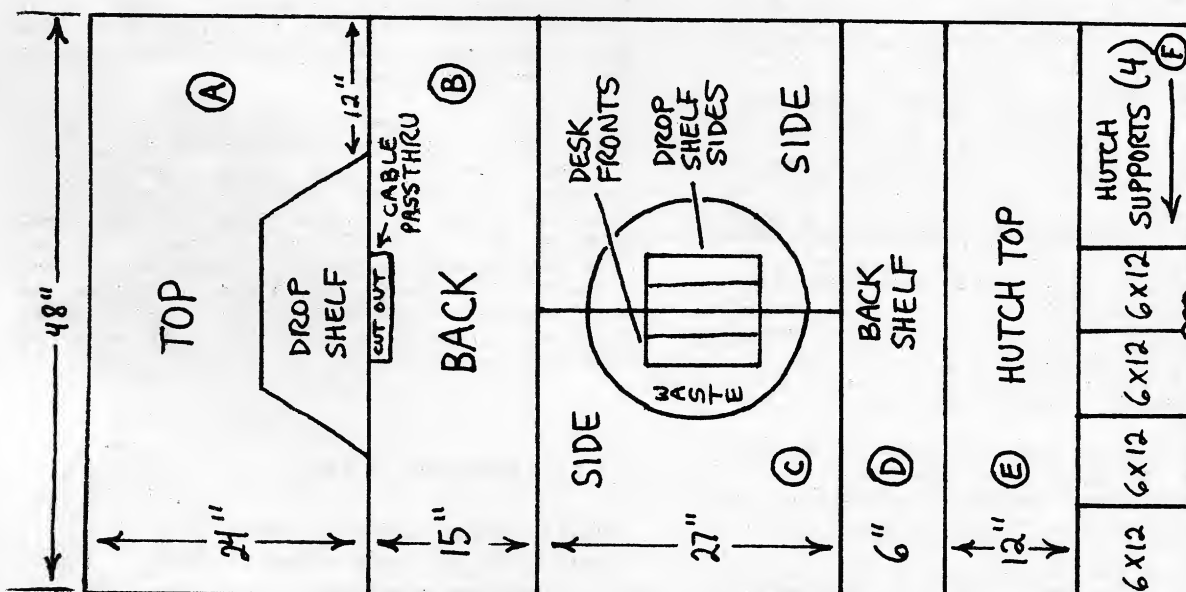
Also included are a variety of bonuses for free time on systems like CompuServe, The Source, Delphi, Dow Jones, and others. More free time is included than the total cost of the modem!

The XM301 modem is expected to retail for well under \$50. Look for it in the early Fall.

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OF SIGHT.(YOU CAN  
TAILOR THE DROP  
SHELF TO THE SIZE  
OF YOUR COMPUTER.  
THE ONE SHOWN IS  
FOR AN 800XL.)THREAD POWER,  
MONITOR, AND  
I/O CABLESTHRU OPEN AREA  
BEHINDDROP SHELF  
AND THRU  
BACK. IUSE A POWER  
STRIP MOUNTED  
ABOVE THE BACK  
SHELF TO SAVE  
OUTLETS. YOUCAN STAIN OR  
PAINT THE  
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IT!

CUTTING

TO CUT CIRCLE: FIND CENTER OF PANEL ©. TAP IN A SMALL NAIL. TIE A  
PIECE OF STRING TO A PENCIL AND THEN TO THE NAIL, LEAVING 12" SLACK.  
DRAW CIRCLE AND CUT WITH JIGSAW.



## Forth For The Scientist

by Donald Forbes - JACG

Two books on Forth written by scientists for scientists have just hit the stands. Here is a rundown on both of them.

The first is 'Forth: An Applications Approach' by Professor David Livingston Toppen who runs the Data Acquisition Laboratory at California State University, Northridge, and has spent the past several years in research on laboratory automation, computing networking, data acquisition and device control (230 pages, McGraw-Hill, 1985, \$20).

"The original intent," as Dr. Toppen points out, "was to focus specifically on areas where micro and minicomputer resources are traditionally used for real time, online data acquisition and device control. As the project evolved, however, it became increasingly clear that Forth affords its users a far richer potential for creative system design than even the author had envisioned. Forth extends to its practiced users the dual benefits of an intrinsically structured programming environment and an economy of code that is virtually unequalled in contemporary computer languages. Consequently, the thrust of the book was broadened to emphasize both Forth's incisive approach to fundamental programming tasks and its facility in the data acquisition regimen.

"The first part of the book focuses on the fundamentals...Numerous examples and solved problems are included.

"Part II (which begins on page 145) addresses hardware-specific aspects of Forth programming. Using examples derived from the laboratory environment, these chapters provide the reader with the programming tools to create and control the interface between his or her computer and real-world devices such as printers, plotters, and spectrometers. An extensive treatment of digital-to-analog and analog-to-digital conversion (and converters) is included, for example, as is a chapter devoted to the fundamentals of signal processing in a Forth programming context."

Toppen concludes that "in the scientific and engineering disciplines, a reader who ... uses the powerful interfacing tool that Forth has proven itself to be, should be able to readily handle a wide variety of interface applications with relative ease and programming efficiency."

The book is loaded with examples taken from a scientific context (he worked mainly with a DEC PDP-11) and even includes a couple of lines of poetry:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
Power equals I squared R.

The jumping knight in chess is called a springer in German, and the logo of two chess knights used by Springer-Verlag has been a familiar sight to research mathematicians for many years. It comes as a surprise to see the imprint on a \$15 160-page book with the naked title FORTH. The second surprise is that the book was originally written in Paris in French by W. P. Salman,

a consulting engineer, and two systems engineers, O. Tisserand and B. Toulout. The third surprise is that the publishers found a competent English translator so that although the text retains a slight flavor of Gallic syntax, it is not enough to prove an obtrusive distraction.

The authors are competent technicians with a sensitive awareness of the history of Forth and a desire to expand its audience.

"FORTH is a computer programming language that is sufficiently new to be unknown to the majority of those working in or studying computing," they point out. "In contrast to the standard languages, ...the user has the power to create his own language and tailor it to the required application...Two other important features of this language are its speed and compactness. It is twenty to thirty times faster than a normal BASIC...and it can be more compact than assembler.

"All these qualities make it a language that promises to enjoy a brilliant future in industry, because it allows the development cost of software to be reduced significantly, while ensuring increased reliability, and without being limited in its range of applications. The purpose of this book is not only to enable you to use FORTH but also to show you its internal workings, since it is a language on the human scale."

The chapter titles are "Introduction and general overview", "The Forth language", "How to program", "Basic vocabularies", "The mechanics of the language", "High-level words", "Special properties" and "Problems."

You can get a feel for the book from the titles of the problems (with complete solutions) in the last chapter:

1. Complex numbers and their manipulation (generation of complex numbers; operators for complex numbers).
2. The Game of Life: Conway's universe.
3. Trigonometric functions.
4. The towers of Hanoi.
5. The eight queens (a chessboard problem).
6. Perpetual Gregorian calendar.
7. File creation and management.

They list the many computers that can run Forth, but I could not tell what machine they themselves used.

Forth has come up from the underground. The language was conceived and developed on the job, far from the normal programming language incubation site of academia or research and development institutes. Contrast this with APL, which was developed as a blackboard language (hence the funny symbols), or Pascal, which was developed as a teaching language. The fact that scientists are adopting the language as their own serves as an encouraging omen.

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THAT YOU WROTE AN  
ARTICLE FOR THE  
NEWSLETTER





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## AUGUST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Reported by  
Joseph S. Kennedy

The meeting opened with the usual question and answer period. No one in the meeting could confirm the problems reported in Dick Kushner's review of Paper Clip in the August newsletter. Ken Pietrucha found a program to log contest entries for Ham Radio operators in answer to a question at the meeting last month. Art had a series of disks including a preliminary copy of BASIC for the ST owners to copy. No interest was shown for CPM programs by the ATR 8000 owners. An extensive discussion was held on the new ST machines. For the 130XE Synapse will release updated versions of SynCalc and SynFile in the next couple of weeks. Batteries Included will release an update on Paper Clip. The 80 column cartridge from BI will not be released due to the fact the the chip producer could not supply on time. Our membership is at 525 members.

Frank Pazel showed us how to get a mouse for the Atari without buying an ST. He demoed Datasoft's "Heathcliff's Fun With Spelling" for us. It's a preschool to first grade spelling program with everybody's favorite cat catching the mouse. Frank also reported, with some incredulity in his voice, that while Atari will no longer repair 810 drives they will replace a broken 810 with a 1050 upon receipt of the 810 and \$90. This was passed on without guarantee by Frank. The data disks for the Print Shop project by the JACS should be to Frank by August 20th. Frank also showed us some BASIC animation done by a high school student and a new way to make APPLE-sauce.

John Scalera, another of our younger members, gave an impromptu demo of Roundabout by Datamost. Thanks for the show John.

The meeting ended rather early due to the cancellation of the two main demos.

\*\*\*\*\*  
GIVE A BIT!!  
\*\*\*\*\*

## PEEKs AND POKES

Kenneth J. Pietrucha - JACG

Last month's column on reading the joystick ports was really in anticipation of this month's article. I had originally wanted to demonstrate how to poke screen color changes, but with all the colors available on the Atari, the only efficient method I could think of was to use the joystick to make the changes.

I must assume that we are all familiar with the basic Atari SETCOLOR command. If we take the basic color 12 and luminance value of 8, we can change the screen color using the command SETCOLOR 0,12,8.

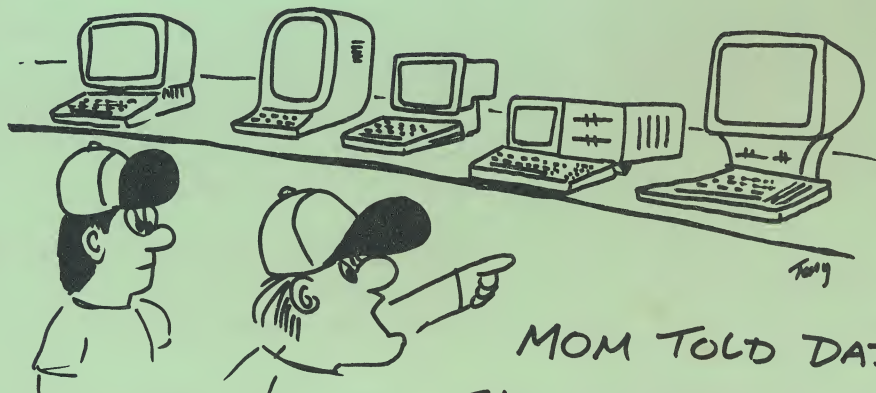
The other way, which I think is a little faster and more popular, is to poke certain locations. To calculate a color to be poked, take the basic color and multiply it by 16, then add the luminance value. In our example SETCOLOR 0,12,8 becomes  $(12 \times 16) + 8$  or 200, which is then poked in location 710.

The border is poked separately by POKE 712,200 and letter brightness is controlled by a POKE 708,X, where X is an even number between 0 and 14.

That's it ! A POKE to 710 for the screen, 712 for the border and 709 for letter brightness.

Now for the demonstration. Try this joystick color program and see what I mean.

```
2 REM PEEK/POKE-7/85
3 REM JOYSTICK & SCREEN COLOR DEMO
4 REM KENNETH J. PIETRUCHA ** JACG
5 GRAPHICS 0
6 A=96:B=102:C=10
7 PRINT "PUSH UP AND DOWN TO POKE SCREEN"
8 PRINT "PUSH LEFT AND RIGHT TO POKE BORDER"
9 PRINT "USE FIRE BUTTON FOR LETTER BRIGHTNESS"
10 IF STICK(0)=14 THEN A=A+2:IF A>256 THEN A=256
12 IF STICK(0)=13 THEN A=A-2:IF A<0 THEN A=0
20 IF STICK(0)=11 THEN B=B+2:IF B>256 THEN B=256
22 IF STICK(0)=7 THEN B=B-2:IF B<0 THEN B=0
30 IF STICK(0)=0 THEN C=C+2:IF C>14 THEN C=0
40 POKE 710,A:REM CONTROLS SCREEN
42 POKE 712,B:REM CONTROLS BORDER
44 POKE 709,C:REM CONTROLS LETTER BRIGHTNESS
45 FOR DELAY=1 TO 100:NEXT DELAY
50 GOTO 10
```



MOM TOLD DAD THAT  
THIS ONE WAS THE LAST STRAW!



## Beyond Armageddon Adventures in Adventuring

by Lord Demonfire

Where has Lord Demonfire been for six months? Has he returned for good? Does he have some new hints for adventurers? Will Gary Hart win the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1988? The answers go like this: (1) Out. (2) No. (3) Yes. (4) It's irrelevant.

Seriously, the reason this column has not appeared for many months is the apparent lack of interest in adventuring. During this time, I have still been offering help on the Bulletin Board. But due to lack of use, I asked Scott Brause to discontinue the DEMONFIRE Q&A board. I still offered to answer questions on the ADVENTURE board, but there was still not much stirring in the teapot. (So to say.) Thanks to a few of you ardent adventurers who have stayed with me, I am publishing a final column. I regret my neglecting to answer the few questions I did get, but I was running into some problems with my modem's compatibility with the Bulletin Board. (Sorry folks.)

Rumor has it that Infocom will be converting some of its adventures to the Atari 520. I'm afraid I can neither confirm nor deny this rumor, but I think it would be safe to suppose that you may soon be playing Zork on your 520 520. By way of new products, Infocom has not released much recently save Wishbringer, an introductory level adventure that novices may find entertaining but is likely to bore the adventure enthusiast. Hopefully they will soon come out with the sequel to Sorcerer (at last report they were still working on it), and with any luck it will be as good as its predecessors. Synapse is coming out with its electronic novels soon, which provide excellent graphics with and Infocom-like parser. That is something we can all look forward to. Also, if my sources are correct, Origin Systems is still working on Ultima IV. Maybe they can get it out by THIS Christmas!

That gets the adventure news out of the way. Now to tie up some loose ends...

### MAIL CALL:

Sorcerer: How do I survive Jearr's possession? (Anthony Outwaite)

To survive Jearr's possession, you must cast the vardix spell (mind shield) on yourself. This spell can be obtained in the coal mine. Tie the rope to the timber and climb down the chute to the slanted room. Here you must travel temporally (golmac spell) and open the lantern to get the needed scroll.

Hitchhiker's Guide: How do I get past the screeching door? (Many adventurers)

You must remove the Common Sense particle from Arthur's brain (you'll know it when you get there) and prove to the door

that you are intelligent by having tea and no tea at the same time. To get the tea you must outwit the Bugblatter Beast (read about it in the Guide) and retrieve the Nutrimat/Computer Interface from his Inner Lair. Plug it in and Volla! You have tea. (Hint: Be sure to drink it before going through the screeching door.)

### TRIVIA:

In response to my earlier question about the numbers on the table in Zork III, they represent the number of Zork you may travel to when you touch the table. For example, touching the table when it reads "11" will send you into Zork II for a few moves (to get a required object). The number "14" will send you into Zork IV, a.k.a. Enchanter. Regarding my challenge to naming all twenty-nine spells in Enchanter and Sorcerer, I have had no response so it's not worth my while (or the precious space in this newsletter) to list them all. Maybe the list will appear on the Bulletin Board if you're interested.

Well, that about wraps things up for this column. You will have to wait a while for the next column; I am embarking on an extended journey to the Ivory Towers of High Sorcery to practice my art. Until then... farewell, and Godspeed!

## READ 'EM AND DON'T WEEP

Opinion by Joseph S. Kennedy

If you were at the July or August meeting you saw a number of newsletters from other user groups lying on one of the front tables. These were newsletters that came to us in exchange for our newsletter. To find out what's happening in the world of Atarians outside New Jersey pick up a couple of copies at the next meeting. But don't be surprised if you read articles you've already read in our own newsletter.

In fact don't be surprised if you finish reading the others and realize just how good the JACG newsletter is. The whole group owes a big thank you to Frank Pazel for continuing to put such a good newsletter out every month. But he can only do it with everyone's assistance by their occasionally contributing something to the newsletter. So in other words

### GIVE A BIT!!

To the above I must add that I have not read every newsletter that we receive, just a cross section of them. Some of them do occasionally reach the level of our newsletter but the only one that seems to get near it regularly is the one from the Portland (Oregon) Atari Club.

Thanks for the great newsletter, Frank!





HERE ARE THE



J A C G



PRINT SHOP



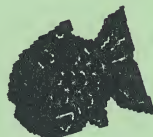
CONTRIBUTIONS



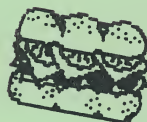
The Jersey Atari Computer Society is putting together a data disk of new pictures for Broderbund's Print Shop. They solicited user groups to submit artwork done by their members which they will screen and turn into a master disk for each participating group.



So far the following clubs are known to be sending in pictures: JACG, JACS, STATUS, PACE, APL, CURRENT NOTES, AUSTIN ACE. Certainly by deadline time there will be many more.



On this page are the 60 pieces of art generated by JACG! The artists are: Bill Brandt, Lord Demonfire, Mark Kordos, Frank Pazel, Tony Pellechio, Dennis Schiefelbein and an anonymous donor who gives us the glyphs (the little round signs that speak internationally and usually mean NO ----).



See if you can match the filenames with the pictures. JACS will provide us with full documentation and the disk(s) by next month so you won't have to guess. Our disk still has room for many more pictures. How about sharing your masterpieces with us? We'll add it to our own library version and pass them on. Send them to JACG Newsletter Editor, 14 Whitman Drive, Denville, NJ 07834. Mark your disk with filenames and your name so it can be returned. Great fun!





# FILENAMES

CHICKEN	ERNIE	FLAG
JACKO	JACG	JACG2
TILE	GARFIELD	NUDE
PALS2	PIG2	POPCORN
FALCON	JOHN	CAT1
SUB	CRAB	SHELL
LOBSTER	LOBSTER1	FISH
MILL	DINO.1	DINO.2
CROSS.1	CROSS.2	KING.KONG
COKE	DEMON	STAR.DAVID
DICE	ATARI	STAR.DAVID2
ATARI1	ATARI2	ATARI3
COMEDY	TRAGEDY	NOPIG
NODRUNK	NOWIND	NOSMELL
NOABUSE	GHOST	ATARI4
STRIPES	CONFUSED	POINT
TV	WIZARD	NO
WALKER	JET	SPACESHIP
SHIELD	CASTLE	PAGODA
GLOBE	WILLOW	WINDMILL



The PaperClip Word Processor  
A Re-Review  
by Richard Kushner - JACB

Hello again, and welcome to the second installment of a report on the PaperClip word processor program from Batteries Included (BI). If you read my column of last month you know that I ran into what was to me a very serious problem with Version 1.1 when it dropped characters at the beginning of each line when I typed at a reasonable speed. I presented my conversation with BI and their response, as a result of which I have received a copy of Version 1.1, which does NOT have this problem and I am, therefore, prepared to give a more in-depth report on this word processor.

I have done some further exploration of the "lost character" problem by comparing the performance of Versions 1.0 and 1.1. The problem occurs with Version 1.0 at a typing speed of about 600 characters per minute and is not present at a speed of 400 characters per minute. I determined this by using two fingers only to type four lines of text at a speed that produced the problem and one that didn't. Thus, the problem starts somewhere between these limits. This seems like a very fast typing speed, since these work out to about 75 and about 100 words per minute. I know I am a fast typist, but I'm sure I don't sustain this kind of speed regularly. Then why did I see the problem? I think it is because there are certain key combinations that touch typists can execute very rapidly, things like "the" and "and" and "ter." If this happens near the end of a line, during the time that the program is making the "word wrap" decision, I am at that moment typing above the critical speed, and characters will be lost. Many people will not see the problem, I admit, but as you type faster and faster you would begin to find the problem occurring more and more.

As I also mentioned in the first article there are certainly a lot of features built into PaperClip. In fact, there are so many features that just listing all of them would make for an article too long to fit into this newsletter! Just assume that every feature you could dream about finding in a word processor is included in this product. You will be 99.9% certain of being correct. Let me outline some of the features I found that appealed to me.

**Cursor control:** You can move all around a file in many incremental steps, ranging from one character at a time to one word to one line to one screen to the whole file length. This makes it quite easy to get to places in the file where you want to make changes or corrections. You can also insert what are called "tags", which are markers that can be used to make it easy to move to specific places in the text.

**Editing:** This is, after all, one of the main things that sets computer word processors apart from typewriters and PaperClip has lots of goodies in this area also. One of my favorites is the ability to invert characters or words. Inverted characters (as in spelling "the" as "teh") are the most common of all typing errors and having a command to fix such goofs is a nice touch. Another nice one is the ability to change upper case to lower case (and visa versa), a feature that is nice when you have been typing along and not realizing that you have been using all upper case letters. A couple of key strokes and this is all taken care of. A toggle to switch between "insertion" and "overwrite" modes of typing is also available, since there are times during editing when you want to type right over the existing text and other times when you want to insert new or missing text. Substitution is also nicely supported, including the ability to do up to six different substitutions at once! This is very useful for putting in words that are used numerous times in your text and which are long and/or hard to type. Think about this ability the next time you have to type a paper on the "telencephalon", where you could have just typed "tph" or some such thing every time the word occurred and later use the ability to substitute to change it.

**Windows:** You can split the screen and have two text documents on the screen at the same time. This is useful when you are working with different versions of a file and also when you have, for example, notes in one window and the main work in the other, permitting you to move words from your notes directly into your main file without retyping or trying to remember what the exact wording was. Both windows can be independently scrolled to look at the text in each, but, of course, you have a limited number of total lines on the screen which must be divided up between the two windows.

**Macros:** This is a new word for the Atari word processing world. A "macro" is simply some word or phrase that you repeatedly use in typing a file. One approach to handling this is the one I noted above, using some simple to type substitute and then later editing the text to substitute the "real thing." Macros are another approach, permitting you to save such words or phrases and then insert them directly into the text using a single keystroke. For example, having your address as a macro makes it easy to put it in its usual place on a letter.

**Undo:** You also have a limited ability to undo text deletions you have made. This is possible when you delete from a point in the text either to the beginning or the end of the file, as long as you haven't moved the cursor before requesting the "undo."



Word Count: Simply by typing CTRL+SHIFT+1 you get a count of the number of word in your file. This is very handy for a writer!

Things like using the fonts your printer supports, centering text, justifying text, line spacing, margins (top, bottom, left, right) can all be set for a variety of printers. It is also quite easy to customize PaperClip for your printer, since a number of printer drivers come with the program, and also to set such other features as whether the whole screen should scroll or only the line currently being worked on when text goes off the end of the visible screen. You also control whether you want the cursor keys to work in the usual way (i.e., using CTRL + the arrow) or having the arrow keys require no use of CTRL (in which case the -, =, +, and \* keys require the use of CTRL). Your customized version can also include a column setting for left margin and line length. Thus, although the screen can only display 40 columns, you can have many more on the screen if you are willing to have text scroll while you type. I find this interesting, but disconcerting when I am typing, preferring to use the "print preview" ability to see the final version on the screen on command, while using only the normal 40 character screen for the original typing.

There are many features I have not covered, but which are nicely described in the PaperClip instruction manual, a well done piece of documentation.

Now it's time to mention some "buts," for even with all its power PaperClip has some drawbacks. I still am not happy with the word wrap. The delay as the program makes its decision is a distraction. Even more annoying is the delays when you insert text in an existing document. I found it far easier to type the new text at the end of the file and move it into place using the "cut and paste" function. A spelling checker as part of PaperClip would be a nice addition. A much bigger concern is the announcement by BI that they have cancelled their Atari 80 column cartridge. I understand their reasoning (inability to get the needed integrated circuit chips in time for the big '85 Christmas season) but 80 columns "on screen" (without scrolling) with a word processor is a very nice feature. You can certainly get by without it, but once you try it, it's hard to go back to 40 columns! My message to BI: PLEASE reconsider your decision; come out with the Atari 80 column cartridge and make PaperClip the ultimate Atari word processor, rather than just the ultimate 40 column Atari word processor. It looks like those who want 80 columns will have to go with Letter Perfect and the Bit-3 80 column board (for Atari 800 ONLY.)

My bottom line: PaperClip is very good, is loaded with features, and is likely to satisfy anyone who uses a word processor, if you don't require 80 columns.

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## Page 12



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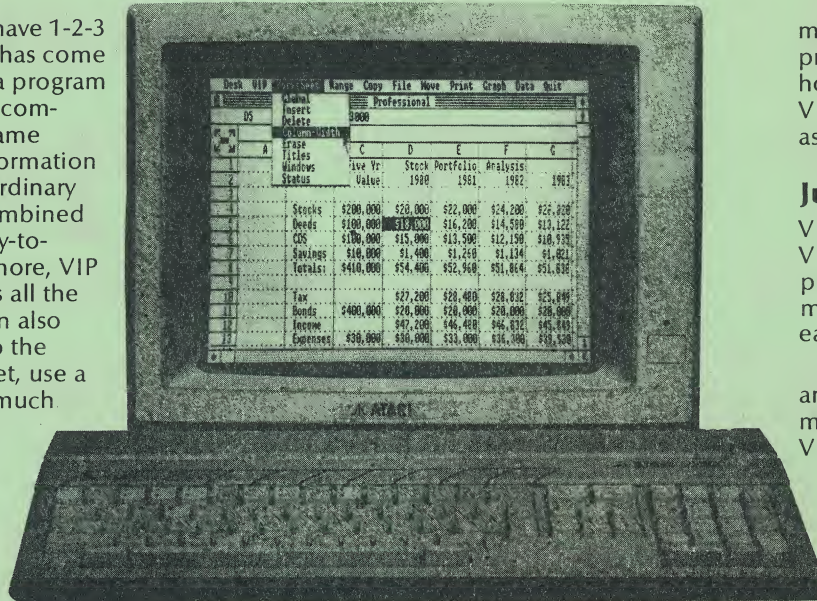
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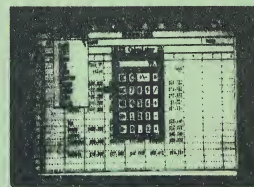
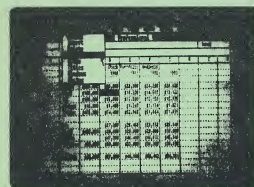
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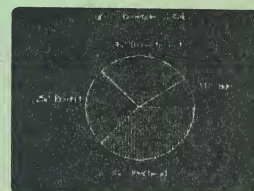
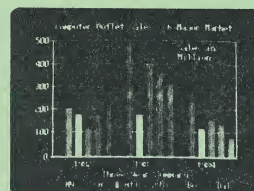
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## Guide To MVP-Forth Part Two by Donald Forbes - JACG

(Here, as a continuation from last month's newsletter, is chapter two entitled Forth Screens of Dr. Glen Haydon's excellent GUIDE TO MVP-FORTH, all in the public domain. The phone number for the BYTenet Listings is 617/861-9774. The book reflects the teaching insights he gained after conducting weekly seminars for a period of two years.)

If you have started with one of the standard implementations of MVP-FORTH, you will have an option available under the FORTH function, CONFIGURE. Try it. CONFIGURE <cr>

You will be shown the number of drives available and a density code which corresponds to the density of the disk you have on each of the drives. You will note that FORTH starts with drive 0 and increases. For two drives the designations will be DR0 and DR1. Hopefully, these designations will be properly set for your system. If so, simply respond with a carriage return. The function will abort unchanged.

The destination of the drives beginning with 0 is the way the system actually identifies each drive. If your system uses drive A, the A is converted to a 0 for access to the drive. Why not just call it drive 0?

Return to your operating system with BYE. BYE <cr>

You will need a special disk for use with FORTH. It is called a FORTH SCREENS disk. This disk will have no system files on it. It can only be used from FORTH. This is why the distribution FORTH SCREENS disk cannot be read by your system. You cannot use your system PIP or COPY command to copy this disk. Later you will learn how to duplicate the distribution FORTH SCREENS disk with FORTH. For now you will not need it.

Use the operating system on your computer to format a new disk. Label that disk FORTH SCREENS.

You can use your newly formatted FORTH SCREENS disk in any drive. For the present, load FORTH from a copy of the MVP-FORTH system disk in drive 0 ( drive A ). Then remove the SYSTEM disk and replace it with your newly made FORTH SCREENS disk. See if the disk part of the system is working under FORTH. 75 LIST <cr>

You should see a screen full of a single character or symbol. When the disk was formatted, a value was placed in each byte on the disk. That byte will print as some symbol or perhaps a lower case e. So far so good. Now see if you can clear the screen of those symbols. WIPE <cr> 75 LIST <cr>

You should now see a blank FORTH screen. At the top is indicated the screen number, 75. Then 16 blank lines numbered 0 through 15 should appear. Conventional FORTH programs are written on such screens.

A number of editors are available to write on FORTH screens. You do not have to learn a whole new editor at this point. The MVP-FORTH kernel has a very rudimentary

editor. It consists of a single command. Now try it.

```
0 PP ( THIS IS LINE 0 ) <cr>
```

```
75 LIST <cr>
```

Everything following the single space after PP will be placed on line 0.

If all is well, you see the text following PP on line 0. If not you might try again. Should that fail, try reading the documentation supplied with your program. In the worst case, Mountain View Press will support you.

Now save the screen to disk. FLUSH <cr> The drive should activate and the screen will be written to disk. Check to be sure. 75 LIST <cr>

The disk drive should again activate and you will see the screen with what you had written on line 0.

Try writing other material on other lines. FLUSH the screen back to disk and reLIST it. Remember you will need to tell LIST which screen to list by entering the desired screen number first. If you forget to enter the screen number you get an error with SCR marked and the message EMPTY STACK. The function needs a value which you did not give it. Try again.

This rudimentary editor is very useful. There is no way to correct part of a line with it. You must type the line over. It will encourage you to keep the lines short. Later you will learn about the line EDITOR available in MVP-FORTH, but this is not the time to learn another editor. Stay with the rudimentary one for now. Ultimately, you may want to add one of the screen editors available for your system.

Each line on a screen contains room for 64 characters. You do not need to use them all. In the example we placed a comment on line 0 within parentheses. It is a custom to place a name for each screen on line 0. Often it is convenient to include your initials and a date. This will help you keep track of what is on each screen. 70 80 INDEX <cr>

This will list line 0 from each of the screens 70 through 80. It makes a sort of table of contents. You will note that all screens except for 75 contain only the format character. Line 0 of screen 75 has its title. Make the title you choose, meaningful to you. Perhaps you can list the functions you have defined on that screen.

The comment is placed in parentheses so that it will be treated as a comment when you later load the screen. Screen 75 has been chosen for example because most disk systems have at least 75 screens. But you can try any screen number you wish. You can check the limit of screens on your disk by doing INDEX through a large number. 75 999 INDEX <cr>

You can interrupt the scrolling by hitting any key. Hitting any key again will restart the scrolling. To leave the scrolling, first stop it with a single key, and then hit any key twice in rapid succession.

The system will list the 0 line of each screen up to the limit on the disk and then stop. INDEX will not go on to the next disk. If, however, you try to list a screen number larger than that on your 0 drive, the system will automatically move on to DR1. You will notice that your second drive activates. It



will be better for the present to stay within the range of screens on DRO. You will have to learn to be responsible. There is no safety check on this feature.

It is often good to use one screen as a directory to the location of material on the other screens on a disk. An early screen number is good for this. On the other hand you do not want to use the first few screens. Those on the zero track of a disk often have some formatting information about the disk. It is best not to write over this information. Therefore you might make screen 10 a directory.

```
10 LIST          <cr>
WIPE             <cr>
0 PP ( DIRECTORY ) <cr>
1 PP 75 A TEST SCREEN <cr>
FLUSH           <cr>
10 LIST         <cr>
You could now define a word to show you
your directory.
: DIR 10 LIST ;
DIR
```

Now return to screen 75 and enter the function CRS which you defined earlier. There is no need to indicate a carriage return at the end of each line. By now that should become a reflex for you. You will also have learned by this time that each FORTH function is separated by a space.

```
75 LIST
WIPE
0 PP ( CRS      )
2 PP : CRS      ( n --- )
3 PP 0
4 PP DO CR
5 PP LOOP ;
FLUSH
75 LIST
```

Your definitions should be neatly laid out on a screen. Several conventions have been used but they are only conventions. You are free to adopt them or not as you see fit. But you and others will probably find the screens easier to understand later if you adopt some clear conventions.

The placement of the name of the function being defined on line 0 within parentheses as a comment has also been mentioned. Place it within parentheses so that it will not be loaded later. Especially during development, but even later extra spaces and white space can be used to advantage to set things off.

Line 1 is left blank as a matter of style. It serves to set off the beginning of a definition on the next line.

On line 2, the colon definition is started in the first column. When the screen is loaded later this line will perform exactly the same function as when it was entered interactively.

Following CRS, the name for multiple carriage returns, you have another comment within parentheses. This is not necessary but later it will serve to remind you what you did. The "n" indicates that a number must be entered before the name of the function. The parentheses indicate that this is just a comment and is not necessary for the definition.

The placement of a 0 on line 3 all by itself seems like a waste of space. But it is necessary if we are going to start the DO structure on the beginning of a line. Again, the 0 is the beginning of the range of

iterations for the structure. The number of iterations will have been entered before the command.

Start structures as DO on the beginning of a line. It makes them easy to spot. You will note that the entries on all lines within a definition have been indented 3 spaces. The spaces make the definition easier to read. Then enter the functions to be performed within the DO ... LOOP. Each DO must be paired with a LOOP. It is easy to see if this is done if the LOOP is entered with the same indent as the DO.

Finally, end a colon definition with a semicolon.

In order not to lose what you have done, it is a good idea to FLUSH a new screen back to disk immediately. You can then LIST is again and see what you have done. At this point, since the lines are so short, it is very easy to retype any line using PP which appears incorrect. Then FLUSH the corrected version.

Now, you can test the screen. 75 LOAD <cr>

LOAD compiles what is on the selected screen just as if you had entered it interactively at the terminal. Writing a definition on a screen and loading it is almost as interactive as writing it at the terminal. The time to load a screen is usually only a fraction of a second. Though this is not strictly interactive programming, it is certainly much faster than the old way of editing, compiling, loading and running. When you have made a mistake or wish to change your program, it is quicker to edit the screen and then load it than it is to interactively type in the definition again.

The response will be the familiar OK -- that is, if all is well. If not you will get an error message showing the screen number and the line number where the error occurred. Then you can RELIST the screen, use the rudimentary editor to make the necessary corrections, FLUSH and LOAD the screen again.

Next debug the routine. Perhaps the definition of the function you wrote would LOAD, but will it do what you wanted?

Now you can repeat a series of commands you used earlier:

```
PAGE 12 CRS 37 SPACES ." HELLO " 12 CRS
The old program should come out the same.
```

Try writing the program as a colon definition on screen 76. Follow the example above. Put each function on a separate line. Perhaps you can include the number on the line with CRS and SPACES. The ." HELLO" can be on a separate line. Gradually, you will learn to think in FORTH

```
76 LIST
WIPE
0 PP ( HELLO )
2 PP : HELLO
3 PP PAGE
4 PP 12 CRS
5 PP 37 SPACES
6 PP ." HELLO"
7 PP 12 CRS
8 PP ;
FLUSH
76 LIST
If what you entered is correct you can
LOAD it: 76 LOAD
```



This lesson is a little long, but there are a few more related functions to learn. If you wanted to have several programs which would put different messages in the middle you the display you could just modify the screen 76. But you might want to keep that screen too.

76 77 COPY FLUSH  
77 LIST

A copy of screen 76 is now present on screen 77. You can now edit this screen by changing the name of the function and the message. FLUSH that one too.

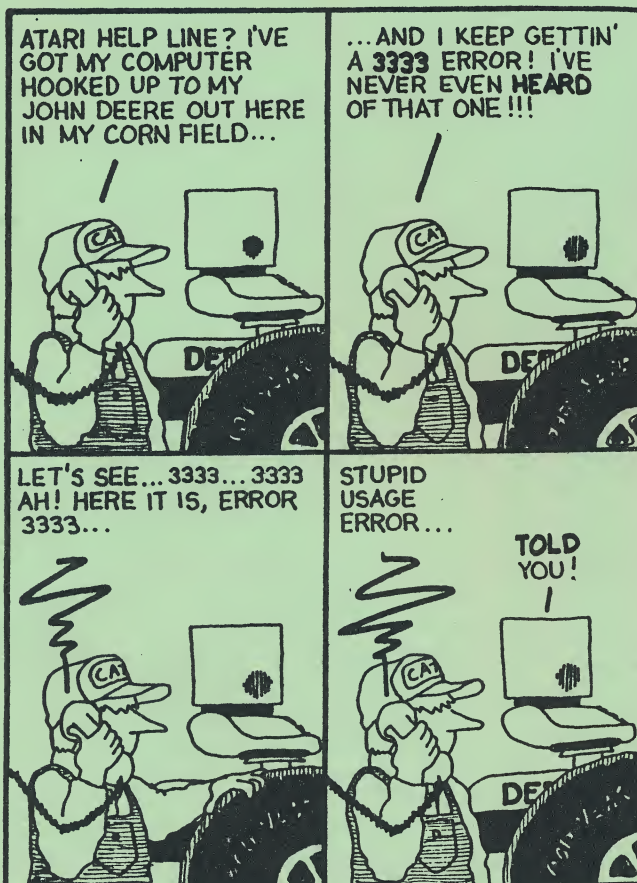
The copy function is trivial. The buffer containing screen 76 is simply renumbered 77. FLUSH then writes the newly numbered screen to the disk.

Next time you load FORTH from your copy of the MVP-FORTH system disk, be sure to replace it with your FORTH SCREENS disk before proceeding. Then you can reload your programs. 75 77 THRU

These relatively simple FORTH commands and techniques should serve as examples for you to expand upon. An exact functional definition of each of the resident commands can be found in ALL ABOUT FORTH. You have saved you new definitions on your FORTH SCREENS disk.

[ To be continued ... ]

#### Hooter Purvis: Boy Computer Whiz



Bay Area (CA) Atari Users Group

## Atari Trivia Quiz

Reprinted from PACUS

OK, trivia fans, here are ten questions that should strain your brain. If you get eight or more right consider yourself an Atari Addict!

1. What is Zyzygy?
2. What movie, set in the far future, displays a giant "Atari" billboard in the background of one scene?
3. In the Broderbund game, "Choplifter" how many total hostages are there per game?
4. In the Gamestar game, "Star League Baseball", what are the names of the three pitchers you can use?
5. In the Electronic Arts game, "M.U.L.E.", what is the significance of Irata, the planet you land on?
6. What is the planet called in the Commodore version of "M.U.L.E."?
7. What do the initials of A.N.A.L.O.G. magazine stand for?
8. What three states can you fly around in in Microporse Software's "Solo Flight"?
9. At which university was BASIC invented?
10. Who were Coleen and Candy?

Answers on page 21

Supra Corp  
1133 Commercial Way  
Albany, Oregon 97321

Dear MPP User;

As you have probably heard, Microbits Peripheral Products Inc. has been closed down. This was largely a result of rapid growth and over extension into new product development during a time when the market could not support it.

Supra Corp is a new corporation that has purchased the rights to MPP and will be marketing MPP products, providing customer support for both old and new MPP users, and will complete development on and bring to market the exciting new products that MPP had in development at the time of their demise. Composed of a core group of people from MPP, we face the task of reconstruction with determination and look forward to making Supra Corp a major name in Atari peripherals.

In the few months between the closing of MPP and the formation of Supra Corp, hundreds of letters have arrived at the MPP offices requesting information or technical assistance. As we are a small company and just starting operations, it simply isn't possible for us to individually answer each of these backlogged letters at this time. With apologies for the inconvenience, I would like to request that those of you who need assistance or have questions please write to us here at Supra Corp, and we will be happy to respond to your letters as received.

Thank you for your patience and we hope to be hearing from you soon.

Regards,

Jiva ~

Technical Support,  
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## Floating Point Forth

by Donald Forbes - JACG

There is a new Forth floating point package for 'turbo-4th' in the club library. The same disk has the extensions to convert your fig-Forth into Forth-79, including the double number extensions.

You have to thank Steve Calfee, who wrote the floating point routines (which use the Atari hardware) in one day, and then placed them in the public domain. Steve, as you know, brought you the free Team Atari Forth (Library disks #19 and #20) and then a few months ago introduced turbo-4th for the Atari at \$27 with vendor support and 96 pages of documentation. His new Forth is compatible with the old one.

Floating point is not new on the Atari. You may have had it for months or years if you own valForth, or Patrick Mullarky's APX Extended fig-Forth (a friend last month found a copy in a store for \$10). All these versions take advantage of Atari's built-in floating point routines.

Gary Feierbach, who teaches a 5-day \$750 Forth Tutorial for Inner Access Corp. in Belmont CA, has recently co-authored (with Paul Thomas) a Prentice-Hall book on "FORTH Tools and Applications." Gary has twenty years of experience in software engineering and served on the editorial board of Forth Dimensions Magazine. He earned a BA in math and physics and an MSEE in computer science at the University of California at Berkeley. He summarizes the issue as follows:

"An area of controversy in FORTH involves the use of floating point over fixed point for computation. In fixed-point computation the position of the decimal point in the result is generally fixed or known ahead of time; in floating point computation the decimal (or binary) point is calculated and saved as part of the result. Some contend that floating point is not really necessary, even if the dynamic range of the results spans many orders of magnitude. They usually point to astronomers that are using FORTH as proof of this contention.

"In the authors' opinion, most applications -- including such areas as operating systems and utilities, process control, graphics, data base management, accounting and simulation -- do not require floating point. Engineering and scientific calculations, on the other hand, can be accomplished a little more easily in floating point. If fast floating point hardware is available, there is no question but to use it. If no floating point hardware is available, then the floating point operations must be simulated in software and will, of necessity, be slow."

Gary then offers a floating point software package in his book.

Here is the glossary for Calfee's package:

FVARIABLE ( --- ^ CREATE AN  
UNINITIALIZED FP VARIABLE )

F@ ( ADDR --- FP ^ LOAD 6 BYTES  
FROM ADDR ONTO STACK )

F! ( FP ADDR --- ^ STORE 6 BYTES  
INTO ADDR )

PICK ( N --- ITEM ^ LOAD NTH ITEM  
DEEP ON STACK )

FPICK ( FP# --- FP ^ PICK THE 6  
BYTE FP NUMBER TO TOS )

FDROP ( FP --- ^ DROP 3 STACK WORDS )

FROLL ( FP# --- FP ^ ROLL THE BYTE  
FP TO TOS )

FSWAP ( FP1 FP2 --- FP2 FP1 ^ SWAP  
6 BYTE NUMBERS ON STACK )

FDUP ( FP --- FP FP ^ DUP 6 BYTE  
NUMBER ON TOS )

FROT ( FP1 FP2 FP3 --- FP2 FP3 FP1  
^ 6 BYTE VERSION OF ROT )

FOVER ( FP1 FP2 --- FP1 FP2 FP1 ^  
6 BYTE OVER )

F+ ( FADD )  
F- ( FSUB )  
F\* ( FMUL )  
F/ ( FDIV )

LN ( NATURAL LOG )  
FLOG ( BASE10 LOG )  
FALN ( NAT EXPONEN. )  
FALOG ( BASE10 EXP )

FIX ( FP --- N ^ CALL ROM TO GET  
16 BIT INTEGER )

FLOAT ( N --- FP ^ CALL ROM TO  
CONVERT 16 BITS TO FP )

FPEVAL (FP LISTADDR #INLIST ---  
FPRESULT )

FSQRT ( FP --- FPSQROOT )

ASCTOFP ( STRADDR --- FP ^ CALL ROM  
TO CONVERT TO FP )

FP ( --- FP ^ NEXT STRING IN INPUT  
CONVERTS TO FP )

FPTOASC ( FP --- ADDR ^ CALL ROM TO  
CONVERT FP TO ASCII )

F. ( FP --- TYPE FP )

F> ( FP1 FP2 --- TRUTH ^ TRUE IF  
FP1<FP2 )

FSIN ( FP --- SIN[FP] ^ GOOD FOR  
PI/2 TO -PI/2 RADIANS ONLY )

Calfee writes: "I decided to go ahead and do the floating point interface to the Atari Rom routines. Note that the ROM package does not include the TRIG functions, but they do have a polynomial evaluation function. So I include a block that builds the Taylor series coefficients for the SINE function. It uses some of the extra memory freed up by the wasted disk buffer. I didn't have any info on how the calculate the other basic function (ARCTAN) and I wanted to send this now, so that one is an exercise for the reader. All calculations are in radians. It is a simple conversion for degrees. And all the other TRIG functions are simple extensions of SINE and ARCTAN. See the Basic



reference manual for other derived functions."

You can ask for a floating point number from the keyboard with this code, which will store the requested number on the stack and then load it into the specified variable:

```
FVARIABLE GALLONS
: STORE-GALLONS ." input gallons "
  QUERY FP GALLONS F! ;
```

If you still have questions, write Steve at 884 Cape Diamond Drive, San Jose CA 95133. He counts JACG members among his best customers.

#### Atari Trivia Quiz Answers

1. Zyzygy is the name Nolan Bushnell originally chose instead of "Atari". Zyzygy produced the original Pong game.
2. Blade Runner
3. Sixty-four
4. "Heat" Muldoon, "Curves" Cassidy, and "Knuckles" Flanagan
5. Irata is Atari spelled backwards.
6. Irata. What did you expect, "Erodommoc"?
7. Atari Newsletter And Lots Of Games
8. Kansas, Colorado, and Washington
9. Dartmouth
10. "Colleen" was the code name for the Atari 800 and "Candy" was the code name for the Atari 400.

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S.L.C.C. (CA) Journal



## ST PRODUCT NEWS

By Neil Harris - Atari Explorer  
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Downloaded from Atari BBS (408)745-5308

(8/2/85)

The first shipments of Atari 520ST systems were sent on July 8, 1985. Within two weeks, systems had arrived at 5 major distributors and 30 user groups (who ordered 180 systems under the user-group-direct offer.

The 520ST sells for \$799.95 at retail and consists of the following package:

- 520ST Computer
- SF354 Single-sided 360K Drive
- SM124 Monochrome Monitor

The 520ST computer package includes the TOS and Logo diskettes, the ST 2-button mouse, and manuals. Once BASIC is released (by the end of August), it will be added to the package and made available to all prior purchasers of ST systems.

The 520ST currently contains 512K (512 x 1024, or 524,288 bytes) of RAM. There is currently 16K of boot-up ROM. This Fall will see the release of TOS on ROM. At that time, the ROM will be upgraded to 192K, freeing up this amount of RAM for programs and data. The ROM will be included in 520ST's at that time and offered at a nominal price to current ST owners as a dealer or service center upgrade.

The 520ST system hardware includes interfaces and ports for:

- 128K of ROM
- 2 Floppy disk drives
- 8 high-speed devices (hard disk, CD ROM, co-processors)
- Centronics-style parallel printer
- RS232 device (modem or printer)
- High-res monochrome monitor
- RGB Analog color monitor
- Audio
- Synch in and out
- MIDI in, out, and through
- 2 Joysticks or 1 joystick and 1 mouse

The ST internally is based around a Motorola 68000 chip, the same as the Macintosh. The ST's 68000 runs at a full 8 megaHertz. Other chips inside the ST include:

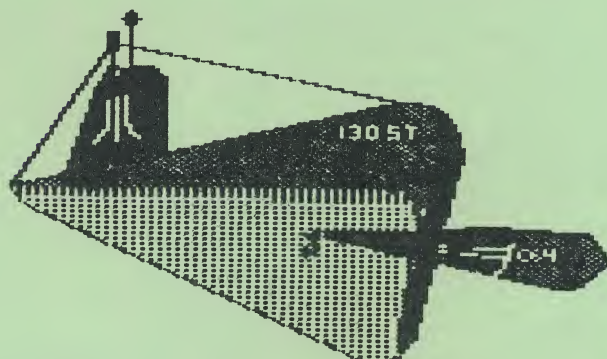
- Video shifter custom chip
- DMA custom chip
- "Glue" custom chip
- Memory management custom chip
- General Instruments 3-voice sound
- Floppy disk controller chip
- Serial I/O chip
- Hitachi microprocessor for kbd

The video shifter (which handles all video output) and the 68000 chips work in close synch with each other when accessing the system's RAM. This results in the complete freedom of the 68000 to run at full speed without "cycle stealing" by the video section.

Future products for the line include:

- SF315 double-sided floppy (\$250)
- 10-megabyte hard disk (\$199)
- SC1224 RGB color 12" monitor (\$399)
- Atari Drawing Program
- Atari Forth
- "Star Raiders II" (?)
- Haba systems - check book minder, HabaDex, HabaWord, hard disk, more.
- Activenture CD ROM
- Infocom adventure games [all finished!]
- Sundog from FTL strategy space adventure
- GEMWrite, GEMDraw, and GEMPaint from Digital Research
- "The Professional" from VIP -- a 1-2-3 workalike
- Hippo C
- Valdocs and Valdraw from Rising Star
- 4xForth from The Dragon Group
- DB Master from Stoneware
- "The Twin" from Mosaic -- another 1-2-3 clone
- Gato from Spectrum Holobyte
- Flight Simulator from SubLogic (awesome)

Call the official Atari BBS (408-745-5308) for more information. Leave any ST questions addressed to SYSOP in the message base and we'll try to get them answered ASAP! Also, check out the skull-and-crossbones BBS for lots of good ST info at (415) 552-8924.



Portland Atari Club

Jack i

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## SON OF MACKINTOSH:

Well, if we are going to call (her?) Jacki maybe that ought to be *DAUGHTER OF MACKINTOSH*. On Jul 30 Digital Acoustics purchased a 512K color Jacki across the retail counter from Computerland on Hawthorne Blvd in Lawndale, which is just south of L.A. International Airport. The numerous boxes which comprise Jacki arrived at 2:30 PM and we played (?) with Jacki until 5:30 PM.

**THE HARDWARE:** Jacki consists of a keyboard unit, which contains the 68000 microprocessor and 512K of RAM, plus a separate black-box power supply ala the C-64. And a two-button mouse. And a 360K 3.5 inch disk drive which has its own separate black-box power supply. If you later buy a second disk drive, you will have a third separate black-box power supply. And a color RGB monitor with a much larger display than Mackintosh.

The color monitor measures 12 inches diagonally and has a specified viewable area of 9.45 inches by 7.1 inches. What we measured was 8.35 inches by 6.3 inches, significantly smaller than the specification. (If that seems small, take a tape measure to your own display - it ain't as big as you think). The default resolution is 320 X 200, with 16 colors. Optionally, 640 X 200 is available, with 4 colors. This means that the monitor is a vanilla color TV modified for RGB operation. With only 200 vertical lines, this is a non-interlaced display with 60Hz refresh. (The monochrome Jacki provides 640 X 400 resolution, reportedly non-interlaced.) The monitor is the only part of the system with a built-in power supply. We could not fault the quality of the display.

The very brief operating manual explains that 'click' means to press the left button on the mouse and to quickly release the button. That seems to work fine, as well as the use of the ball on the bottom of the mouse to drag the arrow around on the screen. But then the introduction tells us to 'double click', without defining the term. By experiment, we learned that 'double click' apparently meant to click both the left and right button simultaneously. However, we could only get this to work right one time in three attempts. We decided we were clutzy and let James S., who was watching the proceedings with amusement, give it a try. Same result. So we invoked the Control Panel and changed the response time setting of the mouse. No difference. Something is either wrong with us or the 'double-click' software. (Yes, we tried placing one finger over both buttons to improve the simultaniety of the 'double click'. Didn't help.) By the way, after about 2.5 hours, the middle finger of our right hand, the one we would like to use to display the Italian fertility symbol to the mouse's inventor, got cramped from repeated unsuccessful 'double clicks'.

[The next day: by changing the response time of the mouse we can improve our average success rate on double clicks to about 70% - still annoying.]

The disk drive is nice. We like. It is much like a smaller and more attractive (Apple) Disk II. True, we would like a double-sided drive in 1985, but 360K is not bad if what you are used to is a Disk II. When you insert the disk into the drive, there is a VERY positive *SNAP!* as the disk is seated into place. And there is a mechanical button beside the disk; when this button is pressed, the disk snaps back out. Again, very positive action. After working with 5 1/4 inch floppies for a long time, the 3.5 inch disks seem very small. We found ourselves handling them very carefully so as not to touch the recording surface. With the Sony 3.5 inch floppy one *CANNOT* touch the recording surface and the disk comes in an apparently rugged inflexible cover. (Old habits die hard.) We are reminded of our similarly traumatic switch from normal 8 inch floppies to the dinky 5 1/4 inch variety back in 1980. The data transfer rate when reading is vanilla CP/M-ish, which means the Jacki has a real disk drive. When saving to disk, the drive is a bit more than twice as slow, which means it is performing a read-after-write. We like everything about this drive except that we would like a second side. (We do understand that Jacki was designed to that \$995 price point, so maybe we should not complain too loudly.)

[Jul 31: already we hear from a reliable source that Jacki will be available with double-density drives "soon", for \$250 each. And that the basic unit can be purchased with the double-density drive by paying the difference in price, whatever that is.]

The keyboard unit seems to have a normal ascii keyboard. How that works out for text entry we dunno because none of the software provided lets you use the keyboard (maybe Logo does?), but that really belongs in the software discussion. For now let us say that there is a keyboard; we have no idea how well it works for a touch typist. On the back and on the two sides there are a LARGE number of connectors. Some are round, some rectangular, and some are D-type connectors.

The most serious and also the easiest-to-fix design flaw of Jacki became immediately apparent as we set up Jacki: The cables to the monitor and the disk drive protrude backwards for six or eight inches, so you are NOT going to place the monitor on the desk behind Jacki. In short order we had that mounting platform which comes with the Apple IIe sitting behind Jacki, with the cables running under and the monitor sitting on top. Obviously, somebody is going to come to market with such a support designed to match Jacki, and somebody else will improve on the idea by designing an improved support which will mount the two disk drives



above and immediately behind Jacki. With the disk drives sitting alongside the left of the keyboard, Jacki has a damn large footprint. Uh, drives? Drives, plural? All of you know that a single-floppy system is unusable except for rock-shooting!

There are no instructions distinguishing between the power supply for the keyboard unit and the other power supply for the disk drive. We would have guessed that the larger supply powered the keyboard unit, but James S. made a different assumption and so we powered the unit up the first time with the units reversed (yes, the power connectors are interchangeable). It didn't work, but there wasn't any smoke either. So we reversed the connectors and tried again. This time it worked.

### A PEEK UNDER JACKI'S SKIRTS:

Naturally, we took Jacki apart and peeked into the innards even before powering it up for the first time. Turn the keyboard upside-down and remove the six Phillips screws and the top pops off. Turns out the keyboard unit has its own little microcomputer. Then the cables pass down to the 68000-based mother board after being wrapped once through a little doughnut. Those of you who are old-time Apple users will recognize the 'doughnut' as a ferrite toroid whose purpose is to eliminate RFI. Obviously, this is a last-minute fix to pass FCC because there is no mechanical support for that toroid.

Ah, the motherboard. The motherboard is completely covered by a metal shield to suppress RFI and pass the FCC tests (there is an FCC sticker on the bottom of the case). This is a metal shield to end all metal shields. It is contoured to fit within the slender confines of what is left of the keyboard case after the keyboard itself is provided for. It is attached to the edges of the motherboard by tabs which extend up through slots on the edge of the metal shield. The tabs are then bent over to secure the shield. One tab on each side is actually soldered to the metal shield to ensure a good ground for that shield. You ask about cooling? *THERE ISN'T ANY!* With the exception of one little interface chip which apparently ran too hot so they cut a rectangular hole in the metal shield just above that chip. With that one exception, the mother board is sealed up tighter than Fort Knox. We would describe that shield as a draconian design measure to assure passing FCC. It is obviously not an afterthought. We think maybe we will wait and pull the metal shield off our SECOND Jacki - which might give us some insight into the design and also provide us with a second disk drive (cost: \$995!) and a spare color monitor. You see, it is not at all clear that we can take that shield off without busting something.

Sinclair obviously did not take such draconian RFI preventive measures in designing its QL, which is why the QL is NOT being sold in the U.S. Therefore, by default the \$995 Jacki becomes a logical candidate for the Trash-68. We don't think many folks are going to go for the \$795 monochrome Jacki. Interestingly, the \$795 monochrome Jacki is very similar to the \$2500 FAT MACK. Where there are differences, as in expandability, CRT size and resolution, availability of cursor keys etc. the Jacki is superior to the FAT MACK in every instance. Well, we told you a long time ago that Apple was vastly overpricing the Macintosh, which is a VERY cheap machine to build. Apple must have a really humongous overhead to support. Atari doesn't.

After studying that draconian RFI shield, we have serious doubts about when or whether the Amiga will pass FCC qualification. Remember, Commodore blew it on the B-128 and more recently (evidently) goofed with the C-128, which we think was intended by Commodore to be sold beginning about 1 July. IF Amiga passes FCC - and we emphasize that IF - it will be a machine with superior hardware at double Jacki's price. Definitely not a candidate for a Trash-68.

For you newcomers to this rag, our use of 'Trash-68' is not intended to be pejorative. To the contrary, we are referring to a 68000-based personal computer which is an ideal FIRST computer, as the original Radio Shack Trash-80 was an ideal first computer for hundreds of thousands of computer enthusiasts. Ideal first computers do not need the ultimate in data storage, screen resolution, etc - but ideal first computers DO need a low price. Again, Jacki is the only Trash-68 candidate in sight, the QL having failed FCC.

### A THREE-RING CIRCUS:

Ignoring software, here is our perception of the Mack, Jacki, and Amiga:

The FAT MACK is clearly inferior to both the \$795 and \$995 Jackis, and vastly inferior to the Amiga. And yet the FAT MACK is if anything more expensive than the Amiga and VASTLY more expensive than Jacki. If it were not for an 18-month lead in software, you could kiss Mack goodbye. Maybe you can kiss Mack goodbye anyhow. Certainly the 128K Mack is not going to be in high demand in the future.

Next, we note that the \$995 color Jacki is VASTLY superior to the Apple II and yet considerably cheaper. (Remember, we are ignoring software.) We cannot see anyone in the future purchasing an Apple II based on hardware considerations. What this means is that Apple is in BIG BIG trouble, with both of its products being eclipsed by superior yet cheaper competing hardware. That would be true even if Amiga fails to pass FCC.

Now we will not only ignore software, we will ALSO assume that the Amiga becomes real. Here is how we see the marketing battle shaping up:

The Jackintosh is an ideal first computer and is also a very reasonable upgrade for C-64 and Atari 800 owners. James D. of Australia tells us that there are few first-computer buyers left, but there are MANY C-64 and Atari 800 owners looking for an upgrade. The Amiga will have no appeal for first-computer buyers, but will strongly appeal to Apple II types looking for an upgrade. We believe that the future upgrade path for Apple II owners can be determined by a peek into their checkbook after paying the bills. Since the Apple II was an expensive machine in the first place, our guess is that most Apple II owners will opt for the Amiga, not Jacki.

As for what surprises Apple will spring next January at its annual stockholder's meeting, who knows? We do know that Apple does not like to compete on price - Apple apparently has an extremely large unproductive overhead - but Apple finds itself up against not one but two contenders who ARE willing to compete on price. And Apple finds BOTH of its computer lines under attack. If we had to pick a winner, we would choose the \$1275 color Jacki (price includes the required second floppy disk drive and disk/CRT support structure). In second place would be the \$2300 Amiga (the \$1295 basic unit, the \$495 color monitor, a second floppy drive, and another 256K of DRAM making 512K altogether). The computer we would personally prefer is the Amiga, but then we are looking at our eighth or ninth personal computer, not our second. And we have \$2300 left in our checkbook after the bills are paid.

Naturally, we cannot really ignore the software question and that will strongly distort the above analysis. But the software question, as observers of Mack over the past 18 months will attest, is a rapidly moving target.

#### The cliché what am:

Back when it was still flogging the 9900 and 99000 programmable controllers, which it called microprocessors, T.I. would have its salespersons point out at least three times in the first 30 seconds how quickly those controllers changed contexts. Of course! The only internal resource the controllers had was just one base address pointer to all of the machines' registers, which resided in memory. Even now Intel brags that its 286 can change contexts more quickly than the 68000. Of course! The 286 has fewer and smaller internal registers than the 68000, by about a 2-1 margin! T.I. was, and Intel is, trying to turn a liability into a "feature". (And how long does it take a RISC machine, with all those internal registers, to

completely switch contexts? A RISC machine such as the one which is going to be introduced by FAIRCHILD on 15 Aug? [This is being written on 31 Jul.] Answer: WHO CARES? We believe in single-tasking, remember?)

In the tradition of the above, we offer Mack fans some prepared dialogue:

"The Mack has more software. I don't mind that the Mack's CRT is too small. The Mack has more software. I don't mind that Mack doesn't have color. The Mack has more software. I don't mind that the Mack is sealed and doesn't have as many expansion ports as Jacki. The Mack has more software. I don't mind that the Mack's CPU spends most of its time bit-mapping while Jacki has custom graphics chips to boost graphics performance. The Mack has more software. I don't mind that I paid \$2500 for a 128K Mack, then \$1000 for a 384K memory upgrade, so that for \$3500 I have a machine which is inferior to the \$795 monochrome Jacki. The Mack has more software..."

#### JACKI'S SOFTWARE:

First let us provide some ammunition for Mack fans by revealing all the good points about the software which now comes with Jacki:

Moving right along, we will now discuss the bad points of Jacki's software. The very worst point is that the Atari folk did too good a job of copying Mack's software. Jacki is a northward-only machine, just like Mack. Based on the software provided with the machine, we do not understand why they bothered to include an ASCII keyboard at all. We have in the past suspected that we were not a mouse person, and after our three-hour ordeal yesterday we have absolutely confirmed that our suspicion was well-grounded in fact.

Example: Jacki is a 512K machine with (for the moment) a single 360K disk drive. Obviously, the way to copy one disk to another (formatted) disk is to type "COPYAB", insert disk A, then remove disk A and insert disk B. Done! Go on to the next task. Right? Sigh... wrong.

You have to go through a clumsy sequence of icons and windows just to get the copy task started. Then it is necessary to insert both disk A and disk B four times each. That's eight disk insertions. After each of the eight swaps you have to use the mouse to move the arrow over to the right hand side of the screen to acknowledge "OK". Then one immediately has to move the arrow over to the other side of the screen and



acknowledge that the next disk swap has been accomplished... after the swap is accomplished, of course. This turns the simple task of copying a disk into a one-armed paper-hanger nightmare. More than 20 mouse operations are involved in addition to those 8 disk swaps, and no two consecutive mouse operations take place at the same place on the screen. *THIS IS MORE USER-FRIENDLY THAN "COPYAB" FOLLOWED BY A COUPLE OF "Y" RESPONSES TO PROMPTS? I YI YI!*

So this is worse than Mack? According to Bob P., who wrote half of a book on the Mackintosh, this is genuine, vintage Mackintosh type software!

Look: the three most successful personal computers in recent history are the C-64, the Apple II and the IBM PC. The Mackintosh has had, compared to those three, a very modest success. And sales of Mack are slowing down, not gaining momentum. The C-64 is a text-oriented machine with very good graphics, considering its cost. The Apple II is a text-oriented machine with outstanding graphics at the time it was introduced. The IBM PC is a text-oriented machine with optional graphics. *PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL THREE OF THESE SUCCESSFUL MACHINES ARE TEXT-ORIENTED!*

Now look at Mack and Jacki. They are *DEFINITELY* not text-oriented. While we know from our mail that there are a few icon-oriented mouse fans out there, they are clearly vastly outnumbered by text-oriented persons. Which means that Jacki is not ever going to achieve the sales which its cost-performance ratio promises until it gets rid of that damn icon interface! In other words, until it kicks GEM aside. Understand, removing GEM can be made optional so as not to alienate the few icon fans. But most persons are text-oriented and will agree with us that the provided method of copying disks (expletive deleted).

A Jacki with a text-oriented operating system and a BASIC written in assembly just like the C-64, Apple II and the IBM PC looks like a winner to us. A Jacki which only has GEM for an operating system looks like a loser. There are only so many icon/mouse freaks and most of them have already bought Macks.

(Naturally, the above remarks will also apply to Amiga if Commodore tries to stuff an icon/mouse-oriented operating system down the publics' throats. If Commodore does that, we will keep our \$2300.)

[We wish to acknowledge that Jacki apparently comes with LOGO. The next time we program in LOGO will be our first time. If there is ever a next time. You know, Dick B. pointed out to us that structured TURBO PASCAL had sold 300,000 copies. We replied, yes, and there are more than ten million people out there with unstructured BASICs! Jacki does not have a BASIC.]



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The above listings are free to current advertisers. Others interested in being listed in this column should send business address and telephone number with check for \$5 per month, payable to JACG, to advertising manager Joseph Rowland, 429 Washington Street, Hackettstown, NJ 07840.



Nick/Punch/London

"What gets me is that the \$50,000 computer I stole now sells for \$69.98"



## FLEA MARKET RULES

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In order to clarify the intention of the Executive Committee in sanctioning the use of the BTL lobby before and after monthly meetings for use as a member flea market we publish the following rules:

1. All flea market sellers must be current JACG members.
2. Space is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.
3. Only ORIGINAL programs with ORIGINAL documentation may be sold in the area of software.
4. Hardware of any type may be sold normally without constraint. The Executive Committee reserves the right, however, to limit the physical size and space consumed by such hardware.
5. Flea market business will be conducted only in the lobby and ONLY when the meeting is not in session in the auditorium.
6. The Executive Committee reserves the right to deny or suspend the privilege of flea market usage to any person, member or not, for infraction of these operating rules.

## TRADING POST

Trading Post is a service for JACG members who wish to sell or swap items of any type. There is no charge for this service. Material must reach the Editor by the 20th of the month to be considered for inclusion in the following month's Trading Post. No commercial services or items will be accepted.

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FOR SALE: KAYPRO 10 portable CPM computer with 10 megabyte hard disk drive. All original software includes Wordstar, dBase II, Turbo Pascal, T/Maker III, CPM 86, dBase utilities (d-Util, Quick Code, dGraph), Abstat, Supercalc, too many others to list. \$2300. Call Art Leyenberger at (201) 887-2861.

FOR SALE: ATR8000/64K with 2 double-sided, double-density disk drives (power supplies built-in) and lots of ATR and CPM software, all for only \$600. Atari 800XL computer, Atari 810 disk drive, Atari light pen + cartridge, all for \$250. Call Dick Kushner at (201) 638-8732 evenings.



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# J A C G #  
# JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP #  
# 40 LAWRENCE ROAD #  
# PARSIPPANY, NEW JERSEY 07054 #  
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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JACG NEWSLETTER - VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1  
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J A C G EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Arthur Leyenberger  
40 Lawrence Road  
Parsippany, NJ 07054  
(201) 887-2861 (home)  
(201) 386-4254 (work)

Vice Pres.: Scott Brause  
12 Bradford Road  
Edison, NJ 08817  
(201) 549-0878

Secretary: Larry Moriano  
80 New Road Apt 30  
Parsippany, NJ 07054  
(201) 575-8044

Treasurer: Ron Kordos  
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Morristown, NJ 07960  
(201) 285-9678

Librarian: Don Ursem  
37 Clover Lane  
Randolph, NJ 07869  
(201) 895-2522

Editor: Frank Pazel  
14 Whitman Drive  
Denville, NJ 07834  
(201) 627-8845

Programs: Ali Chaudry  
58 Manor Drive  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920  
(201) 647-6822

BBS Sysop: Scott Brause  
12 Bradford Road  
Edison, NJ 08817  
(201) 549-0878

Pres. Emeritus: Richard Kushner  
58 Dewey Avenue  
High Bridge, NJ 08829  
(201) 638-8732

Advertising: Joseph Rowland  
429 Washington Street  
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Disk Librarians:  
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